

# SERMON 2

## The Real Superhero

(Revelation 1:1)

### INTRODUCTION

I don't know about you, but I've always been struck by superhero stories. Those who possess superpowers and who are the only ones capable of saving the planet and, sometimes, the universe! Superheroes capture our attention and admiration: we've read their stories, watched their movies, and bought their video games. Who hasn't been amazed by the actions of Superman, Iron Man, Batman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman, Black Panther and Captain America?

According to DC Comics and Marvel Universe, these characters are in charge of taking care of the enemy



forces that threaten to destroy us. They are not afraid of anything, or anyone and with their superpowers they can perform unimaginable feats. Their stories are so shocking that in 2014 a DC Comics magazine, which first featured Superman, sold through eBay for no less than \$3,207,852!<sup>1</sup>

Although these superheroes captivate our attention, we know that they

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.europapress.es/cultura/libros-00132/noticia-10-comics-mas-caros-historia-20160326102823.html>

are the product of the imagination of their creators. They are not real! They exist only in our imagination and on our screens!

However, there is a real superhero, who is not a figment of the imagination. This superhero has the superpower of being the only one capable of bringing peace to the disturbed heart, comfort to the anguished soul, hope to those who have had enough of crying and salvation to the lost. Do you want to know the name of such a powerful superhero? *His name is Jesus: the true superhero of history.*

## DEVELOPMENT

**I.** As you read the Bible, you will realize that each of its stories as well as each of its teachings are intended to show us the person, character, and power of Jesus Christ. The superhero of the Bible is Jesus!

Of all the books of the Bible, the one that speaks most about our superhero is the last book: Revelation. The book of Revelation was written around A.D. 96 by John. Do you know who John is? Do you remember?

John was one of the twelve disciples who, being only a young man, was called by Jesus (Matthew 4:21) and without a

second thought responded positively to his invitation. As a result, his life was transformed.

Before his call he was called the “son of thunder” (Mark 3:17). After his encounter with Jesus he became known as the “beloved disciple” (John 21:20-24). What an impressive and wonderful transformation! Did you know that Jesus wants to do the same with you? If you accept Him today as your Savior, your life will never be the same again!

John, the “beloved disciple,” wrote five books of the New Testament: The Gospel of John, Letters 1, 2, 3, and Revelation. But you know? Many young people only like to read the Gospel of John and not Revelation!

I’ve heard some young people say, “Revelation is a difficult book to understand. It’s full of symbolism, mysterious numbers, secret codes, and hidden keys.” Others have confessed to me that they don’t like Revelation because it looks like a horror movie, where they talk about wild beasts, dragons, death, plagues, disease, pain, and destruction.

But would this be true? Is Revelation a book of terror and hidden mysteries? Revelation is not a book of terror; quite the opposite: Revelation is a full-color

portrait of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the triumph of God's love! So that you can see what I am telling you is true, let me read only the first few verses of this wonderful book:

*The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near. (Revelation 1:1-3).*

Did you notice well? The book of Revelation is the *revelation of Jesus Christ*. The English word revelation is the translation of the Greek word *apokalypsis* and literally means to *unveil* or discover. Have you ever seen a work of art unveiled? It is an important occasion in which someone pulls a cord and, for the first time, the work of art is publicly seen as the artist intended. That's exactly what the word Revelation means! It is to remove the veil so that the image of Jesus Christ may appear in all His splendor and glory!

It is for this reason that in each one of the 22 chapters of Revelation, Jesus Christ is the protagonist, who appears adopting different names and exercising

different functions. Our superhero is mentioned with more than 38 different names and descriptive titles; in the first three chapters alone, he is mentioned in various ways 137 times, and throughout the book there are about 250 references to his great person.

We find our superhero being:

- The First and the Last (Revelation 1:17).
- The Son of God (Revelation 2:18).
- The Holy and True (Revelation 3:7).
- The Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5).
- The Word of God (Revelation 19:13).
- The King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16).
- The Alpha and the Omega (Revelation 22:13).

**II.** What are the superpowers that Revelation highlights of Jesus Christ? There are many!, but let me introduce you to only three of them. Let's start by talking about our *superhero being God the Creator*. In Revelation 3:14 we are told that Jesus is "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of *God's creation*."

Jesus is the *beginning* of creation. Does this mean he is a created being? No

way! The word “beginning,” used in this verse, comes to us from the Greek word *archē*, which means originator or ruler. Our superhero is the creator, originator and supreme ruler of creation! Let’s look at what John himself wrote regarding the divinity of Jesus:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made (John 1:1-3).*

Since we know that our superhero is the creator, *let’s talk about some of his attributes.* Did you know that of all the names and titles that our Jesus adopted in the book of Revelation there is one that is his favorite?

Oddly enough, it is the name *Lamb*. Revelation uses that name 28 times to refer to Jesus! It is a bit strange to us that this is the name that Revelation uses most to tell us about Jesus, since the image of a lamb brings to our mind fragility and vulnerability.

I’ve never heard of a basketball or baseball or soccer team using a lamb as its symbol! We hear about the Bulls or the Timberwolves, but I’ve never heard of a team called “The Lambs of New York”! Can we imagine how the fans would

feel? No one would be a fan of a team with this name!

But it is important that we understand that God works very differently than we human beings do. While in popular culture the image of a lamb is a symbol of weakness, in the Bible it is a symbol of power and victory.

For example, in revelation chapter 5, the Lamb is described as follows:

*And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (v. 6).*

In this verse we see the lamb as having *seven horns* and *seven eyes*. Maybe we’re a little confused and wondering: What does this mean? It is of the utmost importance that we understand that Revelation was written using symbols and to understand the symbols it is necessary to compare them with the rest of the Bible.

The horns in biblical prophetic language represent *power, strength, honor,* and *exaltation* (Deuteronomy 33:17; Numbers 23:22); likewise, the eyes are a symbol of knowledge and *wisdom* (Psalm 34:15; 1 Peter 3:12). On the other hand, in the Bible the number 7 is a

symbol of *perfection*. So the image of the seven *horns* represents perfect power (*omnipotence*). For its part, the image of the seven eyes refers to perfect knowledge (*omniscience*).

Praise be to the name of God! Our superhero can do anything and knows everything! His power and knowledge are perfect! In him there is no weakness or defeat! He is eternal and almighty!

Finally, Revelation tells us that our superhero *is powerful to save*. Revelation chapter 5, verses 9 and 10 state of the Lamb:

“You are worthy to take the scroll,  
And to open its seals;  
For You were slain,  
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood  
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,  
And have made us kings and priests to our God;  
*And we shall reign on the earth.*”

Jesus was sacrificed for you and me, and because of His sacrifice we have been freed from condemnation and eternal death (Romans 8:1). Our superhero is the *faithful witness*, the *firstborn of the dead* and the sovereign of the *kings* of the earth. *He who loves us has washed us of our sins with his blood* and made us kings and priests for God,

his Father, be the glory and kingdom forever and ever (Revelation 1:5-6).

## CONCLUSION

John Franco needed a superhero to come to his rescue. As a child he lost his parents in a terrible accident; because of this tragedy he had to live with his grandparents, but at the age of 17 he left home and traveled to Brooklyn County, New York.

While there he became a member of a gang and at just 20 years old, he was sentenced to two years in prison for armed robbery. While in prison he fell into a deep depression.

At age 22 he received parole, but the use of drugs, alcohol, and his constant relapses into the labyrinth of depression led him to be admitted to a treatment and mental health center. When he left this center, he had nowhere to go, so he ended up being a vagabond in New York.

He was constantly seen lying in the street, a victim of overdoses. John desperately needed someone to help him out of the deep pit he was in! He needed the help of a superhero to help him overcome his addiction!

One day while walking down the street he found a flyer announcing the

start of a week of evangelistic lectures, titled “*Revelations of the Apocalypse*.” He saw the address and decided to attend.

When he arrived at the church, he heard the preacher say that Jesus is the only one who has the power to give freedom and before the preacher finished his message John’s face was bathed in tears. At that moment he asked God to work a miracle in his life.

In a powerful way God worked in his heart! Jesus, the divine superhero, came to his rescue and gave him the strength to deal with all his addictions! Today John Franco is an addiction-free youth and active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Dear young man and miss, *Jesus is the true superhero of all history*. That is why today I wish to extend an invitation to you to accept Him into your lives.

- If you feel *lost*, Jesus, your superhero, is your *Savior!*
- If you feel *weak*, Jesus, your superhero, is all-*powerful!*
- If *you’re confused* and don’t know which way to go, Jesus, your superhero, knows *everything!*
- If you feel *defeated and hopeless*, Jesus, your superhero, is God the *Creator!*

- Come here! Come here! Surrender your life to the true superhero of history: *Jesus Christ!*

## REFLECTION AND STUDY QUESTIONS

- 1.** Who wrote the book of Revelation?
- 2.** What does the word “Revelation” mean?
- 3.** How many names does Jesus adopt in Revelation?
- 4.** What does it mean for the lamb to have “seven horns” and “seven eyes”?
- 5.** According to Revelation 1:5-6, what has our superhero done for each of us?